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The Wo denounced by Chriſt to them, of whom all Men ſhall ſpeak well, conſider'd,

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IN A

SERMON

Preached at the

Triennial VISITATION

OF THE

Right Reverend THOMAS Lord Biſhop of *SARUM*,

HELD AT

The Church of St. MARY in READING, on *Friday*, *July* 17. 1741.

By ROBERT BOLTON, LL.D. Dean of *Carliſle*.

Publiſh'd at his LORDSHIP's Requeſt.

LONDON:

Printed for C. RIVINGTON at the *Bible* and *Crown* in *St. Paul's Church-yard*. 1742. [*Price* 6 *d.*]

The Wo denounced by Chriſt to them, of whom all Men ſhall ſpeak well, conſider'd, &c.

LUKE vi. 26.

Wo unto you, when all Men ſhall ſpeak well of you.

THIS and the Six preceding Verſes exhibit to us Bleſſings and Woes, applied after a very extraordinary manner; each made their Portion, to whom the common Voice would adjudge the contrary. Poverty, whether in our Condition or our Spirit, few are diſpoſed to think a Comfort; yet here the Declaration is, *Bleſſed are ye, Poor; for yours is the Kingdom of Heaven.*

To hunger, to weep, to be hated by our Fellow-creatures, to have our Company rejected, to be reproached, to wear the Name of Evil-doers, as melancholy a Situation, as it may appear to human Wiſdom, yet, ſee what Recommendations it finds from divine! We are, in theſe Circum-

ſtances, moſt bleſſed: We are then to rejoice, to expreſs our intire Satisfaction; ſince this Treatment of us has been that of the Juſt and Good, in every Age.

WE thus uſually miſtake a happy State; nor do we leſs a miſerable. Calamities are, often, then moſt to be feared, when we conclude them fartheſt removed. Who wiſhes not himſelf in the Number of the Wealthy, the Full, the Merry, the univerſally Commended? Yet, to theſe a Wo belongs;---*theſe are to mourn and weep.*

MY Text obliges me to confine my Diſcourſe to the Perſons laſt-mentioned: *Wo unto you, when all Men ſhall ſpeak well of you.* And I ſhall inquire, *Firſt*, How far a good Name is deſireable: *Secondly*, What Steps may be fairly taken to procure it: *Thirdly*, In what reſpects a Wo belongs to him, who has it among all Men.

LET us, *Firſt*, ſee, how far a good Name is deſireable.

THERE is nothing we more generally court, than the Approbation of our Species. A few poſſibly may be found, who, with the Tyrant in *Cicero*, care not how much they are hated, if they are feared; or, with the Miſer in the Poet, give the People Leave to inſult, while they have their Gold to ſolace, them: But our ordinary

nary Care is, certainly, that we may be well thought of, that our Character may be fair and irreproachable. A good Reputation is thus the Deſire of moſt, and a great has ever had ſome ſuch fond Admirers, that no Toil, no Danger, no Suffering has been declined to purchaſe it. Even Life has ſeemed a Sacrifice well repaid by it; and to part with the Exiſtence of a few Years, been eſteemed amply recompenſed, by our Praiſe conveyed to lateſt Poſterity.

As romantic a Turn as this may appear to the more Intereſted and Senſual, we can urge in its Favour, that the worthieſt of Mankind have known it --- the wiſeſt Lawgivers, the moſt eminent Patriots, all, indeed, whom Hiſtory bids us revere and imitate. Still the greater the Fortitude or Capacity, the quicker has been the Senſe of Honour, the more eager the Purſuit of Glory. Among the very Perſons, whoſe Profeſſion it was to cultivate Wiſdom, to give every thing its proper Eſtimate, whom do we find indifferent to Fame? The Philoſopher, while he diſſuades from the Love of it, ſhews how much it influences him; the Piece has its Author's Name inſcribed, that teaches you to ſlight the Obſcurity of yours. Every Art, every Science owes its chief

chief Improvements to the Credit expected from making them. He, who has Gain alone in View, proportions to that his Pains; but none are ſpared by him, who thinks the Perfection of his Work its own Reward, whoſe Motive to ſtudy is his Earneſtneſs to excel. Things, in themſelves the moſt contemptible, when appointed Enſigns of Honour, have ever demonſtrated their Power over liberal Minds. The Crown of Oak, or Olive, or Laurel, has whetted the Courage, Induſtry, Wit of Numbers, to whom Gold or Gems would have been weak Incitements; the verieſt Trifles, while confined to Deſert, appearing infinitely preferable to any Acquiſitions the Worthleſs ſhared.

WHAT particularly recommends the Deſire of Eſteem, is the Compliment it pays to our Fellow-creatures. It evidences well-natur'd, favourable Sentiments of 'em, ---a Deference to their Underſtandings and Judgments. We muſt think well of ſuch, whom we are ſolicitous to pleaſe; we expreſs our Approbation of all, from whom we ſeek any: Eſteem is paid, wherever it is courted. It is quite indifferent to us, whether the Man we totally diſregard, cenſures or applauds us. Beſides, a Contempt of our Kind muſt be attended with a Neglect

a Neglect of ourſelves. The Hiſtorian's Remark is, certainly, a juſt one---He, that deſpiſes Fame, deſpiſes Virtue. Mean and diſhonourable Sentiments of the common Nature, prevent the Culture of our particular Faculties, and extinguiſh in us every generous Aim. When we regard our Race, as, in its ruder Manners, worſe than any Brutes; ſo in its civiler, but a better Sort of Brutes---when we dwell on the Defects of Man, and, treating all his Opinions and Reaſonings as raſh and miſtaken, contemn whatever ſuch a Creature determines of us; we ſoon loſe all Notion of any Principle within us, worth our Care--- we come to look upon ourſelves, as Part of the Herd, to conſult throughout the Gratifications of Appetite, and deride Conſcience as much as Reputation. What care I for the World? What has it to do with my Actions? is always the Speech of a Knave or a Proſtitute—— of one, worſe than any of the World thus ſlighted.

THERE is a Reverence due to our Species: Our Intereſts are common, our Dependence is mutual: And, as the Behaviour of every one, either immediately, or conſequentially, affects the Public; the Public has a Right to examine, to paſs its Judgment, to applaud what is uſefully imitated;

tated; and, what is perniciouſly, to brand with Infamy and Reproach. That ſuch Sentence ſhould not paſs unheeded, is of the moſt Importance; becauſe the Good of Society requires ſomething more, than an Honeſty within the Law—— than a Forbearance of Actions, that have Stripes or Death for their Puniſhment. When we value our Reputation, we give the Community a ſort of Pledge for our Conduct ——afford it ſome kind of Security, that our Behaviour ſhall in no wiſe prejudice its Intereſts.

AND, as it is of Service to others, that we ſhould not be indifferent, what Character we maintain; it is really of the greateſt to ourſelves, that we preſerve a fair and unblemiſhed. Whether we have Power, or would get it; whether we are ſupported by our Patrimony, or our Profeſſion; whether retired from the World, or converſant in it; whatever our Situation is, whatever our State, a good Name is of eminent Advantage to us.

REPRESENT the Magiſtrate, as abuſing his Truſt——as partial and oppreſſive—— as having an Intereſt ſeparate from the Public—— a Hatred of him enſues; his wiſeſt Counſels are ridiculed, his beſt Endeavours are miſinterpreted, all Obedience

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is Conſtraint; no Regard is had, whoſe Ruin is prevented, if his be completed. By the ſame Methods, that ſome are brought low, others are kept in Obſcurity. Is the popular Voice unfavourable to you? Whatever Favours your Superiors would beſtow, they dare not——— The general Sentiment of you muſt appear theirs; to countenance you under ſuch Odium would endanger their ſharing it.

In all Buſineſs, our good Reputation is near as ſerviceable to us, as our Senſe and Capacity: Each gladly tranſacts with us; the moſt Artful are awed by us; we have no Man's Jealouſies or Suſpicions to contend with; a few Words ſerve our Turn; and, while we are thought to diſdain the Uſe of any Cunning, we find the Succeſs of the greateſt.

Do we ſeek a Fortune from our Courage or Science? We muſt ſtill pay our Court to common Fame: We muſt build our Expectations, not on what we indeed are, but what it deſcribes us. Be our Circumſtances the moſt affluent we can wiſh them, they can never ſet us ſo far above the World, that it will be an indifferent Point how we are eſteemed in it. Our Credit is, in all Eſtates, a Fence about us——is the beſt Security of our Peace——is our Authority,

rity, our Influence. The Moment we loſe it, we are neglected, deſpiſed, want even the Forms of Familiarity from all, whom Intereſt doth not prompt to uſe them towards us: We are expoſed to Inſults and Injuries; nothing is thought a hard Treatment of us, a Wrong done us: Our Complaints paſs unheeded, unpitied; and find moſt readier to wiſh them increaſed, than redreſſed.

THE Holy Scripture, indeed, in my Text, bids us dread the Applauſe of all, (the Reaſons of which ſhall be conſidered in their Place) but it ſuffers us not to miſtake the Value of a good Name, properly ſought; repreſenting it as *rather to be choſen, than great Riches*——— *as better than precious Ointment:* That *their Name ſhall be left for a Curſe*———*ſhall rot, be deſtroyed and blotted out*, is a Threat often uſed to reclaim the Offending; as the Righteous are frequently promiſed, that *their Name ſhall be great*——*ſhall be had in everlaſting Remembrance. David*'s moſt earneſt Prayer was, that he might not be made *a Reproach*; and it is *Demetrius*'s Commendation, that he had *a good Report of all Men.* They, who converſed among the *Gentiles*, were injoined a Converſation, that might be *well ſpoken of* by them; and the

the Command is expreſs, that we are *to provide Things honeſt in the Sight of all Men.* As for them, who are ſet apart to keep up a due Senſe of Religion in the World, to reprove, to rebuke, exhort, and, by every perſuaſive Method, to promote Piety and Virtue among their Fellow-creatures; 'tis impoſſible that their Attempts, in this great Work, ſhould proſper, if their Manners are reproachable.

SUCH of the Antients, as have beſtowed their Pains on forming the perfect Orator, lay a peculiar Streſs on his moral Character: They will not allow any, but the good Man, to be the truly eloquent. And moſt certain it is, that, how plauſible ſoever our Repreſentations of Things may be, how concluſive ſoever our Arguments, the Ears of none will be open to us, but upon the Opinion that we would not deceive them—— that our Integrity would make us abhor to impoſe upon them—— that we are ourſelves perſuaded of what we recommend to their Belief. *Quinctilian*, therefore, remarks it as an Inſtance of great Propriety in *Virgil*, that when he deſcribes a Perſon capable of calming the Rage of a ſeditious People, he makes it the leading Part of his Character, that he is eminent for his Virtue. But if, whether we ſpeak

in the Capacity of Senators, or Advocates, or Magiſtrates, it be admitted as neceſſary in order to affect our Hearers, that we ſhou'd be eſteemed worthy their Confidence —that our Probity ſhould not be queſtioned; it muſt be obvious in what Light they ſhould be ſeen, who call to Holineſs, as Profeſſors of it— as having devoted themſelves to promote it. Though other Blemiſhes may be excuſed in us, thoſe certainly will not be, which are a Departure from the Perſonage we aſſume— which are Failures in the Part we take upon us to act. Venality in a Patriot, Cowardice in a Soldier, Corruption in a Judge, find a general Cenſure, have every Tongue inveighing againſt them. Our proper Buſineſs, my Brethren, is to extend the Influence of Religion and Virtue, by our Example and Inſtruction: Whatever is exceptionable in us, that neceſſarily hinders not this, will readily be overlooked; whatever can be objected to us, that doth neceſſarily obſtruct it, is that Avowal of our Diſingenuity—that Evidence of the Inſincerity of our Profeſſions, for which all muſt condemn us. We do not pretend to a greater Sagacity, a quicker Apprehenſion, a better Judgment, a more extenſive Knowledge than others; and therefore the

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Want of them is not reproachable in us; but it muſt be greatly to our Diſhonour to be deficient in the Qualifications, without which we can be of no Service to Religion, to be deficient in Piety and Virtue: Theſe are our Arts——As to theſe, ſuperior Application and Attainments are what we profeſs, and what ought to diſtinguiſh us. All, whom we exhort to obey the Laws of Chriſt, naturally compare our Conduct with our Exhortations. They will not enter into our Arguments, till they are ſatisfied of our Sincerity; nor mind us any farther, than we ſeem to mind ourſelves. They conclude, we muſt needs know the full Strength of our Cauſe, and find no ſurer way of coming at our Sentiments about it, than by inquiring into our Practice. If we really believe, that it is of ſuch vaſt Importance, as we aſſert it, to lead an unblameable, uſeful Life, They think it moſt reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that we would endeavour to make ours ſuch: If we are convinced, that an uniform Virtue has ſo much to hope, and each wilful, deliberate Crime ſo very much to fear, They will not be perſuaded, but this Belief muſt appear in the Care we take to diſcharge our Duty. This Reaſoning upon our Principles from our Practice, is thought the more juſtifiable, as

we are kept at a Diſtance from many Temptations to Vice, to which Perſons, in all other ways of Life, are expoſed—as our Studies, our whole Employment contributes to form us to Piety and Holineſs ——as any groſs Failure in our Morals is really a Violation of the Rules of Decorum, that the leaſt Notion of Honour, or even common Prudence, would make us ſcrupulous to avoid——as, further, our ſecular Intereſt ſo much depends on our irreproachable Lives—— as, likewiſe, nothing can be our greater Diſparagement, nothing can debaſe us more, in the Opinion of all Sorts of Men, than a Conduct unſuitable to the Goſpel we preach. The Service, that can be done to Chriſtianity by the authorized Teachers of it, thus ſo wholly depending on the Reputation they are in for Uprightneſs and Sincerity, we may well expect the particular Directions on this Head, from Holy Writ, which we find in it. Upon the firſt Choice of Deacons, the Injunction of the whole Body of the Apoſtles was, that it ſhould extend only to ſuch, as were *of good Report.* So St. *Paul,* in his Inſtructions to *Timothy,* requires, that whoſoever *uſes the Office of a Deacon,* ſhould *be found blameleſs*—— that a Biſhop likewiſe ſhould *be blameleſs,* ſhould *be of good Report.*

Report. So in the Epiſtle to *Titus*, they, who are to be *ordained in every City*, are to *be blameleſs*——are to be ſuch, againſt whom there lies no Accuſation of Intemperance, or any Irregularity.

LET this ſuffice on the firſt Head, how far a good Name is deſireable. I proceed,

SECONDLY, to ſhew what Steps may be fairly taken to procure it. Now, as it is blameable in us, to be ſo intent upon it, that we ſhould have no Enjoyment of ourſelves, were our Credit, though unjuſtly, leſſened or loſt——as it is blameable, to prefer the Shadow to the Subſtance, Fame to Virtue, other Mens Opinion of our Worth to our own Conſciouſneſs of it—— as it is blameable, to propoſe to ourſelves any End in our Reputation, as of equal Moment with ſerving the Intereſts of Religion and Virtue——as it is blameable, to deceive the World into a Commendation of us, by hypocritical Pretences, by falſe Profeſſions—— as, laſtly, it is blameable, to ſeek the Praiſe of any, by indirect Methods, by mean Compliances, by ſervile Applications, by flattering their Vanity, or countenancing their Faults——avoiding, I ſay, what is thus culpable, we may be concerned for our Character, we may uſe our Endeavours to eſtabliſh an advantageous one. That Step

Step towards it, which conſiſts in rendering ourſelves what we would appear—— in being the Perſons, we are willing to be thought, is, as the ſureſt we can take, ſo, what we principally ſhould attend to: But when this is not neglected, there are others, which may very allowably be uſed---as,

FIRST, The ſetting our good Qualities in beſt Light. Whom I forbid to paint, I permit to dreſs: Let me not ſee you with a borrowed Tint; employ whatever Cleanlineſs you pleaſe, to ſet off your natural Complexion. Aſſume not the Deſert you want; what you really poſſeſs may be juſtly produced, in any manner the moſt favourable to it. 'Tis Pride, when the Valuation of our Perfections exceeds either in the Kind or Degree: It is Vanity, when even our proper Merit is our ordinary Theme; but it is Prudence and Diſcretion, when no Conſciouſneſs of our Worth is diſcovered, yet the commendable Qualities in us are placed in ſuch a View, as ſecures them the Applauſe they claim. There is a Management to be regarded, not only in the Goods of Fortune, but in thoſe of Nature likewiſe: And, as in the former Caſe, the Appearance ſhould correſpond to the Income, and a wiſe, is ever an elegant Expence; ſo in the latter, the Diſtinction

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is ill conducted, when it is leſs evident: The Gift, conferr'd upon us, is ſo far neglected, as it is obſcured.

SECONDLY, A good Report may be ſought after by a Compliance with the Forms and Cuſtoms of the Age, in all Caſes, wherein they thwart not Duty.

IN many Inſtances, the Community has a Right to preſcribe; and in ſuch Inſtances, our Oppoſition to it is abſurd and faulty. Particularities in our Language, in our Habit, in our Forms of Addreſs, expoſe us to a juſt Obloquy and Contempt. He, that will be wiſer than his Neighbour, throughout his Conduct, will gain Applauſe to no Part of it. The ſelf-ſame Perverſeneſs, with which his Singularity is truly charged on ſome Occaſions, will be thought its Motive under the moſt commendable Circumſtances; and an unſeaſonable Oppoſition to the Times loſe him the Credit of that, which is indeed an honeſt and laudable.

A GOOD Name may, *Thirdly*, be purſued by a general Candour and Courteſy. The Humour of the World will always be, to treat you in the Kind, in which they are uſed by you——to repay Neglect with Abuſe, and give him Honour, from whom they receive it. When Mens Affections are once gained, their Judgment is a Con-

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vert of courſe; and they, who like your Perſon, will, in the Recital of your Virtues, probably enlarge, yet however, be ſure not to leſſen, their Number.

IF there be an Eminence of Deſert, which, even diſdaining all the Arts of Popularity, has every Tongue engaged in its Commendation, it certainly is what few could ever pretend to. The Excellencies, that uſually preſent themſelves, are ſo limited, ſo alloyed, that, when Ill-nature will be ſevere on any of their Poſſeſſors, it cannot but find enough to cenſure. Praiſe, therefore, when it is ſo much matter of Favour, muſt be applied for, by conciliating the good Will of our Obſervers—— by endeavouring to diſpoſe them, to repreſent the moſt advantageouſly what is well in us, and ſhew the greateſt Indulgence towards what is amiſs.

BESIDES, whether it be, that the generality know not how to rate the nobler Qualities, or that they think their Intereſt little concerned, when any ſuch are, or are not, found among the Species; it is moſt certain, that they ſooner overlook the Want of them, than of the ſlender Merit of a familiar Addreſs, a popular Deportment: They are ſooner led to favour your Character, by the Eaſineſs of your Appear-

ance,

ance, than the Superiority of your Endowments.

THIRDLY, Let us conſider, in what reſpects the Wo, in my Text, belongs to him, of whom all Men ſpeak well.

WHEN our Saviour addreſſed himſelf in theſe Terms to his Diſciples, his Meaning clearly was, that if they, who were to correct the Follies and Faults of Mankind, found no Oppoſers, no Aſperſers among them, they certainly muſt be falſe to their Truſt——they muſt be indulgent to Practices they ought to reprove, ought ſeverely to cenſure, and, as far as they are able, diſcountenance. *Wo unto you, when all Men ſhall ſpeak well of you; for, ſo did their Fathers to the falſe Prophets.* If you think to get the Applauſe of all, it muſt be by the ſame Methods, that the treacherous Guides of former Ages uſed to obtain it——by conforming to the depraved Manners and Cuſtoms of the Times——by preaching Security to the Vicious—— by conſulting the Inclinations, and not the Profit of your Hearers.

BUT, that I may make the Denunciation contained in my Text, of more general Uſe, I will not confine myſelf either to the Senſe in which it is here to be taken, or to the Perſons to whom it more immedi-

ately relates; but ſhew at large, what Evil may be feared from an univerſal Applauſe, or is implied in it.

AND firſt, it may be of dangerous Conſequence with reſpect to our preſent Safety. If the Qualities that purchaſe it, ſet us above the ordinary Rank —— if they create us a diſtinguiſhing Regard ——— if they ſeem to fit us for Rule —— or if they appear but joined to an enterpriſing Spirit, we may be thought obnoxious Perſons, a Grievance neceſſary to be removed; and, if our Credit cannot be taken away, our Liberty muſt be, or our Life.

CONSULT the Annals of thoſe Commonwealths, whoſe Moderation, Juſtice, and public Spirit are, at this Day, our ordinary Theme——be, I ſay, the Stories of *Athens* and *Rome* conſidered, and we need not reſort elſewhere for Inſtances, how hazardous a thing it is, in Governments thus conſtituted, to acquire a popular Character—— to have the Voices of Numbers united in our Praiſe. And if this be in any wiſe dangerous in thoſe States, where, without ſome Degree of Reputation, no Riſe can be made, no Employment obtained; we muſt acknowledge it infinitely more dangerous, where the Will of one, or of a few governs, and where, therefore, Suſpicion is always

always awake—— where every one, applauded by the Multitude, is thought capable to ſtir it up, and that Capacity conſidered as ſure to be attended by the Inclination.

Nor is only the Jealouſy of Superiors, in this Caſe, to be feared; but, really, the Malignity both of our Inferiors and Equals. That *Ariſtides* ſhould be diſtinguiſhed by the Title of *Juſt*, is a Grievance, which, if it paſs the Lips but of a few, is deeply at the Hearts of many: They apprehend their own Character to be ſo far leſſened, as another's is raiſed; and read a Satire upon themſelves in an Encomium upon their Fellow-citizens. When Envy and Malice are thus ſet to work, all Opportunities for Miſchief are embraced, and the greateſt Hurt deſigned the Man, to revenge the Impotence of doing any to his Reputation.

2. There may be Danger in a general Applauſe from the Expectation it raiſes.

He, that is favoured by the public Voice, has the Eyes of all upon him: And while theſe deſire to imitate him throughout, and thoſe to know him, none of his Words or Actions paſs unremark'd. From ſuch a Name every Excellence ſhould be inſeparable——ſuch Honour from the Multitude muſt certainly be gained by Endowments far ſuperior to what it poſſeſſes: An Infer-

ence, fatal to many Characters, raiſed on no very weak Foundation. For, as neither Praiſe nor Blame is ever diſtributed in a juſt Proportion, and the World is ſure to repreſent us better, or worſe, than we indeed are; ſo, when it is diſcovered, that we want the Merit, which common Fame aſcribes to us, we ſoon meet with a Denial of even that, to which we have the moſt juſt Claim. The Imagination is capable of any Extravagancies; and indeed, ſeldom if ever, conforms itſelf to Truth: When bid to form an Idea of ſome Worth, it immediately adopts that of the higheſt; and, when taught its Miſtake in one Extreme, it hurries to the contrary.

THUS in each Day's Purſuits, thoſe, from which the chief Satisfaction is expected, produce the leaſt; the Miſtake on the favourable Side, becomes corrected by one as great on the defective.

3. IT is dangerous to have all Men ſpeak well of us, from the Self-deception it is likely to occaſion——from the vain and conceited Turn of Mind it will be apt to promote. Our Virtue has not two more dangerous Enemies, than Praiſe and Proſperity. The Youth, whoſe modeſt, diffident, ingenuous Air ſo pleaſes, that you know not how enough to commend it, loſes his amiable Qualities,

Qualities, through the Compliments paid 'em: By receiving much, he ceaſes to deſerve any Applauſe. And does not a like Diſtraction attend us, through all the Stages of Life? We either ſpend upon the Credit we have, remiſs in the Actions that procured it; or we carry to an Extremity ſome one commendable Part of our Character, and overlook many Parts thereof, our fouleſt Reproach.

THAT the Favour of the Multitude is not the true Teſt of Deſert, we clearly diſcern when it is our Neighbour's Caſe; but when it becomes our own, there is no perſuading us, that we ought not to take for our Due, whatever is ſaid to our Advantage—— that we ſhould think of ourſelves worſe than we are thought of. Each ſo partially views his Merit, that he can clearly ſee, what eſcapes every other Eye; and let but our natural Self-liking find Numbers concur to juſtify a high Degree of it, we ſhall then find it inſenſibly advancing, often tranſgreſſing all Bounds; diſſatisfied, when applied to in the ordinary Forms of Civility; pleaſed only with an Addreſs, that ſpeaks rather Homage than Eſteem. We perceive this verified in Perſons, who might be thought, of all, the freeſt from ſuch a Weakneſs; I mean

thoſe

thoſe, who are in any Reputation for Literature. The Schoolmen could find no Titles ſo well fitted to expreſs each others Worth, as thoſe of the *Irrefragable* Doctor, the *Angelic*, the *Seraphic*. If the Moderns are content the Title ſhould be changed, yet are there none, but muſt be treated in the ſuperlative Strain; it muſt be always the *moſt Famous*, or the *moſt Learned*, or the *moſt Sagacious*. And if Applauſe thus turns the ſtrongeſt Heads of one Sex, we cannot be ſurpriſed at the Effect it has upon the Weaker of the other,—— that a little Admiration expreſſed towards the Complexion, or Features, or Shape, ſhould thenceforward render Truth as diſguſting to a Female's, as it can be to a Prince's Ear.

THE very worſt ſaid of us, if it checks, is ſeldom found to ſubdue our Vanity: When, therefore, all Tongues join to cheriſh it, no Wonder, that it gains a Strength, which Diſcretion vainly oppoſes——that its Influence appears throughout our Conduct ——that, full of what we are, what we ought to be is no longer our Purſuit.

4. A WO may be juſtly denounced to him, of whom all Men ſpeak well, becauſe without Omiſſion of his Duty to his Fellow-creatures, he ſcarcely would gain that favourable Teſtimony from them.

LET

LET any exert themſelves to inſtruct an ignorant, or amend a profligate Age; and would they not have for their Cenſurers all the Conſcious that ſuch a Care reflected upon their Neglect, and all the Intereſted in the Prevalence of Ignorance and Vice? The Prophets in the Old Teſtament, and Chriſt and his Apoſtles in the New, are melancholy Inſtances, to what Lengths Calumny and Cruelty will go, whenever a reforming Spirit ſhews itſelf ——whenever an Attempt is made to reſtore purer Morals, and bring us to a leſs diſhoneſt Behaviour.

THE good Will and Word of the People attend ſuch as join in, or will not ſee their Follies. While to pleaſe is your Care, Praiſe may be your Recompence; but you are no longer to expect it. And will Sincerity pleaſe? Will Plain-dealing pleaſe? If they would, they ſurely would be more in Faſhion——would be more the general Practice, than I believe any will venture to pronounce them.

Am I therefore become your Enemy, becauſe I tell you the Truth? is St. *Paul*'s Expoſtulation with the *Galatians:* but among whom, alas! can we find Truth better received? That, which it moſt imports us to know, we never willingly hear.

We

We love Lyes; they give us the leaſt preſent Trouble; they feed our Vanity; they ſuit our Purpoſes; they repreſent Things as we wiſh to behold them. If you will be ſtiff——will be cenſuring, be innovating, contending with Practices, that have Preſcription to juſtify, and Numbers to authorize them, you muſt be contented with the old Reproach, *Theſe, that turn the World upſide down, are come hither alſo.* A Connivance at whatever paſſes is alike ſerviceable to our Intereſt and our Credit; and he muſt know very little of the Chriſtian Religion, who can queſtion, whether ſuch Behaviour be not directly contrary to its Precepts-- who can aſſign any comfortable Expectations, any thing leſs than Horror and Wo to Men, that have raiſed themſelves on ſo wide a Ruin——that have gained the Applauſe of the World by a Courſe ſo extremely prejudicial to it.

BUT, this is not the worſt Reflection upon them, of whom all Men ſpeak well: Sins of Omiſſion are not their only Crime; many of Commiſſion may, 5thly, with too great Probability be charged upon them.

TO the Vicious our Vices muſt recommend us; and the Countenance we give the Manners of the Corrupt, gain their Praiſe. It is univerſally allowed, that we

may

may be known by our Companions; and we may be as truly by our Admirers. That Harmony in Opinion, that Correſpondence of Inclination, which renders our Converſation an agreeable Entertainment, makes our Commendation an acceptable Subject. He, whom our Morals diſtaſte, or reproach, will neither treat us as Friends, nor propoſe us as Patterns. When *Phocion* heard, that he wasgrown much in Favour with the *Athenians*, What Ill, ſays he, have I done to occaſion it? He well knew, that their uſual Favourites were the worſt of Men ——— thoſe, that fawn'd upon and flatter'd them, neglected their true Intereſt, and gratified that ridiculous Fondneſs for theatrical Amuſements, of which their Story ſo largely treats.

The darling Character in middle Life is that of Him, who pleaſes each in his Way--ſhocks not the Serious, and complies with the Licentious---has much good Humour, and little Conſcience---would diſguſt none with his Scruples, or with his Vices. In this Way muſt all proceed, who make their Court to Popularity, to univerſal Applauſe: They muſt fall in with the Practices of their Neighbours: They muſt comply with their Forms and Faſhions—— muſt prefer what is cuſtomary to what is

right, and as much avoid Singularity in Virtue, as in Habit. We get and keep our Credit, as the Crafty ſecure, under all Changes of Government, their Places, by bending to the Times, by allowing them to preſcribe both what Principles we are to profeſs, and what Duties to practiſe.

IT is with our Actions, as with our Writings: If they ſuit not the Age, they will be cenſured by it. What is good Senſe, and ſound Reaſoning, is, indeed, no more an arbitrary Point, than what is Truth and Virtue; while yet each is made ſuch, by bringing it to the Teſt of our reſpective Prejudices——by every Man's ſetting up his own Judgment and Conduct for the Standard of what is rationally thought and acted.

LASTLY, Should we give the greateſt Allowance, and pronounce the moſt favourably on the Motives to Praiſe; yet, to him, who had that of all, a Wo might be denounced, becauſe it would be certain, he had regarded more the Shew, than the Subſtance of Virtue---had conſulted rather what appear'd, than what was, beſt. Had true Deſert been your Aim---had Duty throughout influenced you, the Populace would have been too ill Judges of your Worth,

Worth, to have ever joined in applauding it. Great Excellencies, in every way, are loſt upon them. Nothing perfect, in any Art or Science, has Numbers its Admirers.

THE Poet's Advice, *Ne, te ut miretur turba, labores*, is a Rule, that alike ſuits us, whether we would be good Authors, or good Men. For, the Multitude reaſon not leſs abſurdly on the Productions of the Intellect, than on the Conduct of the Will ——on Beauty of Sentiment, than on Rectitude of Action. The perfectly Diſintereſted, the inflexibly Juſt, he that is at all times ready to ſacrifice his private to the public Good, his Convenience to his Conſcience, guides himſelf by Maxims, that, as the Many do not underſtand, they cannot eſteem. Popular Virtues are the Subject of popular Applauſe. By great Worth we all of us mean our own —— ſuch as we have attained, or think we eaſily might attain: All beyond this we pronounce Extravagance, a Flight of Fancy; and proper enough, therefore, for a Creature of it, for the Hero of a Romance, but not at all to the Credit of one, that is to converſe in the World, and make there a Figure, or a Fortune.

AND now, what has been the Aim of this Diſcourſe? but as, on the one ſide, to ſhew the Advantage we receive, when none can accuſe us of a diſhoneſt, baſe Action———when our Behaviour is alike free from the Guilt, and Appearance of it; ſo, on the other, to evince how poor a Recommendation even ſuch a Courſe is to the Praiſe of all—— how vainly the beſt Men can hope for it--- how much every Man ſhould fear it; I have preſſed the ſtricteſt Regard to whatever is of good Report; yet ſhewn that what deſerves the moſt commendable, will be diſappointed of it from many Tongues, will be calumniated, will ſuffer from a ſiniſter Interpretation, or wicked Diſguiſe. I have exhorted to ſeek that Approbation, which Virtue will always meet with among the Virtuous, and diſſuaded from all further Concern———from all Concern for their Cenſure, who muſt uſe ſome in their own Defence———who muſt call Names, to prevent the Hearing them——who ſeek to deſtroy the Credit of the Practices they diſregard.

MIND not, therefore, who condemns, when your Conſciences acquit you. Deſpiſe Cuſtom, when it oppoſes Duty.

Fear

Fear alike to offend the Serious, and to pleaſe the Corrupt. Believe Honour Infamy, when Guilt is its Purchaſe—— The Rags and Reproach, that cloathe and accompany Innocence, view as your nobleſt Ornament, your higheſt Renown.

F I N I S.

E R R A T A.

Page 11. l. 25. before *Inſtance*, inſert *an*; p. 19. l. 11. for *them*, r. *it*; p. 21. l. 15. for *Fellow-citizens*, r. *Fellow-citizen*; l. 25. after *him*, add *ſo*; p. 24. l. 6. for *Title*, r. *Style*.

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